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Attorneys for Defendant PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC
COMPANY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY,

Defendant.

Case No. 14-CR-00175-WHA

**SUPPLEMENTAL EXPERT
DECLARATION OF BRAD JAMES,
PH.D., P.E. IN FURTHER
SUPPORT OF PG&E'S MOTION
TO RECONSIDER ORDER
MODIFYING CONDITIONS OF
PROBATION**

Judge: Hon. William Alsup

1 I, Brad James, declare as follows:

2 1. I have been asked by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (“PG&E”) to
3 provide a supplemental declaration regarding my professional opinions on the remaining strength
4 and life of the subject Cresta-Rio Oso 230 kV Transmission Line (“Cresta-Rio Oso Line”)
5 C-hook/hanger plate assemblies and address statements made by Thomas Scott Hylton regarding
6 that equipment. The opinions expressed in this supplemental declaration are based on my
7 personal knowledge and training and experience, as well as testing I previously conducted, as
8 described in my prior declaration. (*See* Dkt. 1187-12, James Decl.)

9 2. In his April 10, 2020 declaration describing wear on the subject
10 Cresta-Rio Oso Tower 009/081 C-hook/hanger plate assemblies, Mr. Hylton stated that in his
11 “professional opinion, equipment that measures between 30-50% material loss, especially on
12 both the C-Hook and associated hanger plate, should in all instances be slated for immediate
13 replacement, not replacement within 6-12 months.” (Dkt. 1185, Ex. A, Third Hylton Decl. ¶ 5.)
14 Mr. Hylton’s statement implies that the level of wear in the subject Cresta-Rio Oso Line
15 assemblies brought them near structural failure and made them a risk to public safety. However,
16 Mr. Hylton provides no supporting evidence or engineering calculations to demonstrate that the
17 condition of the subject C-hooks and hanger plates posed a threat to public safety and were in
18 need of immediate replacement. As described in my initial declaration, I performed mechanical
19 testing and engineering calculations and determined that the subject Cresta-Rio Oso Line
20 C-hook/hanger plate assemblies were not at risk of imminent failure.

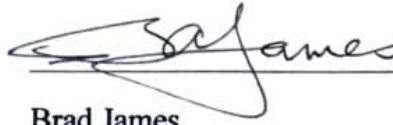
21 3. I note that in his fourth declaration, Mr. Hylton does not repeat his claim
22 that C-hook/hanger plate assemblies showing material loss between 30 and 50 percent “should in
23 all instances be slated for immediate replacement”. Instead, Mr. Hylton now states that the
24 remaining strength and life of the Cresta-Rio Oso Line C-hooks and hanger plates at issue are “a
25 distraction and beside the point”. (Dkt. 1194, Fourth Hylton Decl. ¶ 3.) Setting aside
26 Mr. Hylton’s views on relevance, he does not dispute that these components in their current
27 condition are an estimated 57 to 60 times stronger than the estimated service loads they are
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1 required to withstand, and likely had many decades more service life before they reached the
2 level of wear that would be required by California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”)
3 General Order 95 (“GO 95”) for replacement. (*See* Dkt. 1187-12, James Decl. ¶¶ 10, 14.)

4 4. Mr. Hylton further states: “According to PG&E’s own procedures, the
5 company does not want equipment in the condition of the Cresta-Rio Oso Tower 09/81
6 connection hardware on its transmission towers.” (Dkt. 1194, Fourth Hylton Decl. ¶ 3.) From
7 an engineering standpoint, the inspection and replacement criteria set forth in PG&E’s Electric
8 Transmission Preventive Maintenance Manual, (*see* Dkt. 1187-6, Hvistendahl Decl. Ex. 1.),¹ as
9 they pertain to the subject Cresta-Rio Oso Line Tower 009/081 jumper cold-end hardware,
10 specify replacement many years before the equipment reaches the CPUC’s specified threshold
11 for replacement under GO 95 (as exemplified by the testing and analysis performed on the
12 components of interest). Again, Mr. Hylton has done no analysis to dispute that conclusion.

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27 ¹ PG&E Electric Transmission Preventive Maintenance Manual, TD-1001M, Nov. 20, 2018,
28 Rev: 04.

1 I declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and
2 that I executed this declaration on May 23, 2020, in Menlo Park, California.

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4 
5 Brad James